

AROUND THE HOUSE WITH PHIL DAVY



Are you ever overwhelmed by the amount of woodworking information out there? Before the days of the internet most woodworkers sourced material largely by reading magazines and books, or perhaps went on a short course. Next, instructional VHS videos were the next best thing to having a teacher alongside you at the bench. Quality improved when DVDs came along, but it was really YouTube that enabled anyone to access specific demos and techniques for using hand tools, machinery, project builds and so on. But it's so easy to get side-tracked. Key in a subject on YouTube and you'll probably get a raft of other topics which are equally fascinating. Before you know it, half an hour has slipped by due to watching other stuff...

USEFUL KIT/PRODUCT: TREND STEALTH HALF MASK

Over recent years there have been a surprising number of face mask designs on the market. Some have stayed the course while others have disappeared. The Stealth is the latest half mask from Trend and should appeal to woodworking fans of *Star Wars*!

The rubber inner mask incorporates a pair of replaceable filters, plus a downward-facing non-return valve. A rigid plastic outer protective grill clips onto the mask and includes a durable, elasticated fabric strap to secure the unit to your head and neck. The fully adjustable strap passes around your head twice, with plastic links at the back. I found them a bit awkward to snap together, though this just means getting used to the technique.

Filters

The Stealth comes with two P3 HEPAC (High Efficiency Particulate Air Composite) pleated paper filters, though carbon filters are also available for working with nuisance fumes and odours. These cost £13.14 per pair, while standard P3 filters are £11.10 per pair. Simple to change, they're held in place by a flexible rubber lip and slot into their compartments. Between them most very fine particles (down to 0.3 microns) will be filtered out, so the Stealth can be used in a variety of work situations across a wide range of materials.



The Stealth half mask in use



Conclusion

Two mask sizes are available, though there's not much guidance here. I found the medium/large fitted my head nicely, though I'm not sure what that says about me! The smaller version is recommended for female wearers.

Trend claim the Stealth has the lowest breathing resistance of any mask available. It's certainly pretty comfortable and can be worn fairly easily with glasses or eye protection. So, an excellent mask that's far more efficient than disposable types and doesn't cost a fortune. And you even get a resealable plastic bag to hide the Stealth away...

SPECIFICATION:

- ▶ **Weight:** 131g
- ▶ **Respiratory protection:** BS EN143 P3R
- ▶ **Assigned protection factor:** APF20
- ▶ **Conforms to half mask standard:** BS EN 140
- ▶ **Supplied with:** 1 × pair of P3 filters & 1 × storage bag
- ▶ **Typical price:** £26.34
- ▶ **Web:** www.trend-uk.com

THE GW VERDICT

- ▶ **PROS:** Excellent face seal; easy to fit; carbon filters available; comes with storage bag
- ▶ **CONS:** Not so good for beards; check your head size
- ▶ **RATING:** 4.5 out of 5



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